

PUBLIC COMMENTS

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2011

2:00 p.m.

In the Matter of the Applications for a Route Permit and  
Certificate of Need for the 115 kV Glencoe-Waconia  
Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Numbers: E002/TL-10-249  
E002/CN-09-1390

Clay Community Building  
327 Elm Street West  
Norwood Young America, Minnesota



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1                   MR. BILL STORM: I've got one card. I  
2 will ask Richard Stolz.

3                   MR. RICHARD STOLZ: Yes.

4                   MR. BILL STORM: Okay. I'll ask you to  
5 come up to the mic and I'll turn the mic on for you.  
6 And, again, we do have a court reporter here and  
7 it's not for any reason to intimidate anybody. The  
8 court reporter helps me out because then I know  
9 exactly what you've asked and then I can get that  
10 answer to you.

11                   So state your name and spell your name  
12 and then ask your question or make your comment.  
13 And we'll go with a show of hands after that if  
14 anybody else has something.

15                   MR. RICHARD STOLZ: My name is Richard  
16 Stolz, S-T-O-L-Z. And I have a question rather than  
17 a comment. And I read the application and there are  
18 alternative routes 3A and 3B. And I think those are  
19 the anticipated -- I don't know whether they call it  
20 de-engineering, or at least I believe those lines  
21 are going to be removed.

22                   And I just wonder, one, if that's true;  
23 and will some other method of feeding the sub in  
24 Young America take place? I'm just not sure how  
25 those two lines -- it was mentioned in the slides



1           that if there's distribution lines on it, the poles  
2           will probably be cut off, which makes sense. But if  
3           there's no distribution lines, will the poles be  
4           removed and gone?

5                       So my question is on the north/south line  
6           coming into the Young America sub and the east/west  
7           line going out of the Young America sub, if there's  
8           no distribution lines, will the poles be removed?  
9           And in particular, the one north/south, what's going  
10          to happen with that line? It's not clear to me on  
11          those lines what's going to happen. So that's the  
12          question I've got.

13                     MR. TIM ROGERS: Those are good  
14          questions. We still have to design things. I  
15          believe the distribution will stay on these poles  
16          that go east and west through these backyards. And  
17          so the idea would be to take out the transmission  
18          line, the upper portion, and leave the poles in  
19          place.

20                     We still have a 69 line that needs to run  
21          north and south into the Young America substation.  
22          So this transmission line will stay in place and  
23          then -- but there is a little segment here where we  
24          would -- I'm not sure if there's distribution on it,  
25          but we would no longer need the 69 there because we



1           would have the 115 coming up this way (indicating)  
2           and then we have the 69 being fed here. So there's  
3           a little small segment that I believe the poles will  
4           be taken out.

5                     MR. RICHARD STOLZ: If there's no  
6           distribution, will you remove the poles?

7                     MR. TIM ROGERS: I don't see why not, but  
8           we're going to have to look at this project in more  
9           detail. It's in the very early stages, we have to  
10          engage our distribution planners on this. But I'm  
11          not really sure on that.

12                    MR. RICHARD STOLZ: Okay.

13                    MR. BILL STORM: Anyone else have a  
14          question or a comment?

15                    MR. TIM ROGERS: We did have an earlier  
16          question about what substation we'd be tying into.

17                    MR. TIM LEONARD: Do I have to go up  
18          there?

19                    MR. TIM ROGERS: Yeah, and say your name.

20                    MR. TIM LEONARD: Tim Leonard,  
21          L-E-O-N-A-R-D.

22                    I have a question. I live by the West  
23          substation and right now a 230 line goes right on  
24          the south side of me and the new -- or the 69 goes  
25          just right -- I mean, right on my place.



1                   And now that one's going to be upgraded,  
2                   so I'm wondering when that comes into the West  
3                   substation, is that going to tie in with that  
4                   substation there too and continue on?

5                   And also, how will that power affect --  
6                   that increased power with power on both sides of me  
7                   now? I have a dairy farm out there and how will  
8                   that impact the stray voltage situation? I know  
9                   last time when I put up a hoop shed out there, I had  
10                  Xcel Energy out. And I had an issue with arcing  
11                  from the 230 line to my hoop shed and there was  
12                  about a half-inch steady arc on that, and they  
13                  basically told me I shouldn't put it there.

14                  And if you look on a -- if you print up a  
15                  map of my place, I've got lines that I have no room  
16                  for expansion overall. So I'm just wondering if  
17                  there's going to be any kind of compensation or  
18                  a document or a -- kind of to see if there's going  
19                  to be any impacts on the existing facilities that  
20                  are underneath this power line.

21                  MR. BILL STORM: Okay. Before Xcel  
22                  talks, in the environmental document that I will get  
23                  up, and you can see from my list, stray voltage is  
24                  an issue. It is a category that I will be  
25                  investigating. So I will look at what Xcel Energy



1 is projecting or predicting their electric fields  
2 will be for their transmission lines and the  
3 relativeness of structures or people's businesses  
4 near that.

5 And we will discuss -- as we do in all  
6 our cases, we will discuss stray voltage and what  
7 the potential for anyone along this line to have an  
8 issue with stray voltage will be. So we'll discuss  
9 stray voltage in a standard frame and we will  
10 discuss it specific to this line.

11 Xcel, would you like to comment?

12 MR. TIM ROGERS: Sure. I think I have  
13 contact names for any issues you're having with  
14 stray voltage. I'm sure you already have talked  
15 with us.

16 MR. TIM LEONARD: Yeah. Actually,  
17 they've done -- when they first put -- actually, I  
18 think it was Xcel that put the three-phase line in  
19 right down 106th Street. And they had set up --  
20 before they put that line in they set up a meter to  
21 test how much voltage was coming on to the farm and  
22 then they did it again for a period after, but that  
23 probably was seven, eight years ago or longer.

24 And my concern is not only when they put  
25 up this other 115 right on the other side of me,



1 I've got a 230 on this side and a 115 on this side  
2 of me (indicating). I mean, I've got juice coming  
3 in from both sides.

4 MR. TIM ROGERS: Yeah. I think that's a  
5 great idea to document the situation right now prior  
6 to this project, and we should be able to address  
7 any concerns or any changes to your system or your  
8 facility.

9 The transmission line that's being  
10 described today, we are tapping into the city of  
11 Glencoe's new Diamond substation, we're tapping into  
12 the Plato -- we're rebuilding the Plato substation.  
13 This project does not involve the Young America  
14 substation. And it does affect the West Waconia  
15 substation and we will have a little line in and out  
16 to the northwest of the substation. And that's that  
17 photo I showed you where our proposed lines go in  
18 and out.

19 MR. TIM LEONARD: Yeah. And then there  
20 was also on there the alternative routes, it looked  
21 like one of them would probably run down 106th  
22 Street versus staying along Highway 5, and that  
23 would even bring it closer.

24 MR. TIM ROGERS: Right. That alternate  
25 route is -- your situation is the main reason we



1 thought, you know what, we should continue on  
2 Highway 5 and then come down County 51. You've  
3 already got the 230 there, we just thought it was  
4 too tight an area and that's why we have our  
5 proposed route which goes further northeast and then  
6 down south on 51.

7 MR. TIM LEONARD: Well, how much power is  
8 run through that three-phase line that goes right  
9 down 106th; do you have any idea?

10 MR. TIM ROGERS: Any of my engineers  
11 here? That is a distribution question and this is a  
12 transmission project, but we can help you out I  
13 guess.

14 Did you hear the question?

15 MR. SRINIVAS VERMURI: Yeah, but I don't  
16 know the answer.

17 MR. PAUL LEHMAN: Is this a distribution  
18 feeder?

19 MR. TIM LEONARD: Well, it's a  
20 three-phase. They upgraded it. I think it used to  
21 be -- I don't know how many volts it had before, but  
22 they upgraded it. It's probably been seven, eight  
23 years ago.

24 MR. PAUL LEHMAN: It's probably -- if  
25 it's a distribution feeder, it's probably 13,800



1       volts. And those feeders tend to carry eight, nine,  
2       ten, what we call MVA, millivolt amps. So that's  
3       the general dimensions of a distribution feeder.  
4       But that one there, I don't know specifically, but  
5       that's typically what you'd see.

6               MR. SCOTT JOHNSON: It might be a 34.5  
7       kV, it might have been upgraded to a 34.5. When the  
8       substation was rebuilt, that might have been part of  
9       that along 51 which was upgraded at that time and  
10      stuff. But somebody could take a look at that and  
11      I'm sure get back from distribution as to what  
12      voltage that's at.

13             MR. BILL STORM: Yeah. I want to remind  
14      you that we have a court reporter. So if you're  
15      going to speak, come up to the mic, state your name,  
16      and then have your speak.

17             I want to assure you that we will cover  
18      stray voltage in the environmental document. And  
19      once the environmental document is done, like I  
20      said, we will cover it from a generic standpoint and  
21      we will cover it from a specific standpoint of what  
22      is the likelihood of this project creating a stray  
23      voltage issue and anybody along the route.

24             Once the environmental document is  
25      complete, if you've signed up on our list, on our



1 mailing list, you will get a notice that the  
2 document's complete and it will also be posted on  
3 those web pages I showed you.

4 And then once you get it or you look at  
5 it on the web and you look at it and you read it, if  
6 you're not satisfied, the next step after the  
7 environmental review is we're back here with an ALJ,  
8 administrative law judge. And if you still don't  
9 feel that your issue has been covered to your  
10 satisfaction, that's another opportunity for you to  
11 bring it up to a judge.

12 And sort of related to that, when the PUC  
13 makes its decision on a route, it issues a route  
14 permit. The decision around the route permit is,  
15 first, they decide if the environmental document is  
16 adequate; meaning that I've covered the issues that  
17 I've scoped correctly.

18 So if you have a specific issue, like  
19 you're just talking about right now, how it affects  
20 your farm, I'd encourage you to send me a note on  
21 that. And say, Bill, I want this covered in your  
22 environmental review document. I want you to  
23 address how this impacts this farm right here, your  
24 farm, you know.

25 So when we get to the end and the PUC is



1 making their decision on issuing a permit or not,  
2 one of the things they determine is: Did I do an  
3 adequate job on the environmental report?

4 The next thing they determine is should a  
5 permit be granted to Xcel, saying okay, you can  
6 build the line.

7 And the third thing is where is that line  
8 going to be built. So that comes out in the permit.

9 The permit also has conditions and if an  
10 issue, whether it be an environmental impact issue  
11 or a human health impact issue, raises up to a point  
12 where the Commission or the ALJ -- the ALJ will  
13 write a report after he or she hears everybody's  
14 comments -- the PUC has the power to put conditions  
15 into their permit.

16 And a condition in that permit may relate  
17 back to something that needs to be done in regards  
18 to your situation. Maybe that "something" is an  
19 additional evaluation, who knows. It depends on  
20 what the record will flesh out. I mean, the  
21 record may flesh out that this line doesn't have any  
22 potential to affect you, you know. But I want you  
23 to know that you can come to that hearing and you  
24 can, again, voice your opinion if what you read in  
25 my document doesn't satisfy you.



1 MR. TIM LEONARD: (Nods head.)

2 MR. BILL STORM: Anyone else have any  
3 questions?

4 Please come up to the mic and state and  
5 spell your name for the court reporter.

6 MR. LARRY GASOW: Larry Gasow, G-A-S-O-W.  
7 I'm with the McLeod County planning and zoning  
8 office.

9 Just regarding your study with the EAW  
10 and things like that, will you be doing the study  
11 for the entire line, which would include Glencoe  
12 Power and Light and Xcel? So it would be from  
13 Glencoe all the way through, or would you be  
14 starting your study just at the Diamond substation  
15 from there on out for Xcel?

16 I guess the county has no problem doing  
17 that for the permitting on the line and the  
18 substations, but just -- and, you know, if the PUC  
19 wants to do the permitting, that's okay also,  
20 depending on what Xcel and the Glencoe Power and  
21 Light want to do. But my main concern is just that  
22 the EAW, that that's going to be done for the entire  
23 project, including Glencoe.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. BILL STORM: The EAW, which you're



1       used to as a county regulator, is not part of our  
2       process. Our environmental review is an  
3       environmental assessment on the routing side and an  
4       environmental report on the need side.

5               Like I said, I'm going to combine them.  
6       When the rules say that if I do make a decision to  
7       combine them, we call it an environmental assessment  
8       then, we drop the ER.

9               But from the CON standpoint for this  
10      project, the Glencoe Power and Light and Xcel have  
11      applied for a CON for the whole thing. For the  
12      route part so far, Xcel has applied for a route  
13      permit up and to the point where Glencoe Power and  
14      Light takes over.

15              So the environmental report will  
16      describe -- I guess to the degree that I have  
17      information on what Glencoe is going to do, it will  
18      describe that. But it won't go into the deep  
19      analysis for the Glencoe portion. Because the  
20      Glencoe -- the rules allow a public utility, a  
21      municipal public utility to go local review. So  
22      instead of coming to the PUC for a permit, for a  
23      routing permit, they can go to their local county  
24      for their routing permit, if the county is set up  
25      and if the county wants to do it.



1                   My understanding is that's the way  
2           Glencoe is going to go with theirs. So I will not  
3           be covering in detail the impacts of the Glencoe  
4           routing because I don't know what they are right  
5           now. I will try to incorporate to the level of the  
6           knowledge I have at the time that I'm writing the  
7           report this is the best guess of what Glencoe's  
8           thinking about doing.

9                   But unless they come to me for the  
10          permit, I won't know. If they come to you for the  
11          permit, if they go local review, they still have to  
12          comply with the power plant siting rules. That  
13          means they have to scope it, they have to do an  
14          environmental document, it's not an EAW, it's an EA  
15          in this case, and there has to be public  
16          participation.

17                   And so does that answer your question?

18                   MR. TIM LEONARD: Pretty much, yes.

19                   Thanks.

20                   MR. BILL STORM: But I'm more than glad  
21          to work with you on it and share information back  
22          and forth. And I would encourage the Glencoe Power  
23          and Light, to the extent that they have the  
24          information available, get it to me so I can  
25          incorporate it into my document. But my



1           understanding right now is they're going to go local  
2           review for that substation in that small section.

3                     Any other questions, comments, concerns?

4                     Okay. I want to remind you that you  
5           have -- this computer's killing me today. I want to  
6           remind you that for scoping, for this segment where  
7           we're at right now, for scoping you have until  
8           March 23rd to get your comments to me. You can  
9           e-mail them to me, you can send them to me in a  
10          letter, you can use my form, you can use your own  
11          stationery, it doesn't matter.

12                    Again, what I'm looking for is two  
13          things: One, if you, a local unit of government or  
14          a citizen, if you don't agree with Xcel that the  
15          route that they've laid on the table is the best  
16          route, you know, then come forward with route  
17          alternatives.

18                    You can call either me or Suzanne and we  
19          can walk you through how to lay that out for us, how  
20          to help us with, Bill, I think you should go down --  
21          I'm making this up -- XYZ Street and turn here  
22          instead of there. So that's one thing: What  
23          alternatives do you want me to include in my  
24          environmental report.

25                    As I said, Xcel has applied under the



1 alternative process because they are at that  
2 threshold where they can, and the alternative  
3 process only requires them to put one route on the  
4 table. So if you want me to consider other routes,  
5 you need to bring those routes forward.

6 And it doesn't have to be full routes, it  
7 can be route segments. You can say I agree with  
8 70 percent of what Xcel is doing, but here I would  
9 like you to evaluate what's the impact and cost of  
10 making a little jog.

11 If there's something, like I said a heron  
12 rookery, I don't know why I always use that, I guess  
13 I never run into one, you know, or something that  
14 you think is sensitive, either an environmentally  
15 sensitive area or a human-built area, a cemetery or  
16 some structure that has significance, bring it  
17 forth.

18 And at a minimum, it will be discussed in  
19 the environmental document. The decision might not  
20 go the way you want it to go, but at least it will  
21 get fleshed out in the environmental document. So  
22 alternative routes and issues, EMF, stray voltage,  
23 other issues that you want to make sure that I  
24 capture in my environmental document.

25 When the March 23rd date passes and the



1 scope closes, I will then take what comments I  
2 receive from state agencies downstream, local units  
3 of government, and the public, and I will put  
4 together a recommendation to my Commissioner, here's  
5 what I think the scope should be. And as I said, I  
6 laid out -- at this early stage I laid out what I  
7 think -- I should just start juggling -- what I  
8 think should be in that document.

9 If there's a category in here where you  
10 want to make sure -- if the category is not detailed  
11 enough and you want to make sure that there's a  
12 stray voltage category, not only do stray voltage,  
13 but talk about it right here at my impact. I have a  
14 building that's right next to the line. You know,  
15 explain your situation and I will make sure that  
16 that is discussed. Again, I want to put all the  
17 information on the table.

18 Once the comment period's closed, I make  
19 my recommendation to my Commissioner of what should  
20 be in the scope. If he concurs, he signs off on it  
21 and that is the scope that we move forward on. So  
22 when we get to the end and the PUC has to make a  
23 determination of did Bill do an accurate job on the  
24 environment document, they look back at that scope.  
25 So if it's not in the scope and it's not in the



1 environmental document, they're going to say it's  
2 adequate because it wasn't in the scope.

3 So I thank you all for coming. Sorry  
4 about some of the technical problems. If you have  
5 any questions, you can contact me or Suzanne any  
6 time.

7 No other questions?

8 Okay. Thanks.

9 (Public comment concluded.)  
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